To: Azriel Knight / Comatose Rose

Hello Azriel,

We really appreciated the review you gave our last CD.

"**Auslander**" finds us much further toward the electronica end of the ambient/electronica continuum, incorporating elements of dub, illbient and IDM to creative a more "active" form of ambient, rather than contemplative ambient. I think you'll particularly enjoy "Children Children (Agnus Dei)" and "The Invisible."

We've included a "fact sheet" about the project that you might find helpful if you do decide to review the CD.

Thank you for what you contribute to the musical community. And thank you for auditioning our work. We hope you enjoy the CD.

Peace,
Cyber Zen Sound Engine

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"Auslander"

About "Auslander"

"Auslander" is a German word. Its literal meaning is "foreigner" or "alien." But it has often been given connotations of "inferior," "suspect," and "outsider."

This CD is a musical exploration of being an auslander from many angles, and is dedicated to everyone who knows what it feels like to be an outsider. Sometimes the references are oblique, sometimes direct. And though the CD passes through a very dark space on the way to its conclusion, the second half of "Shroud (the Final Flag)" is intended to convey a sense of stoical hope and an inner strength born of having walked through the darkness.

Musically, we are trying to stretch the boundaries of ambient/electronica by combining elements of traditional ambient, electronica, illbient, IDM ambient, world music and space music, in ways these genres aren't normally combined.

Notes about the pieces:

The title of "Brightly, Brightly and Beauty" is a quote from the book "Stranger in a Strange Land." It is how the main character, Michael Valentine Smith, describes his driving of Duke's tractor ("I drove it brightly, brightly and with beauty.").

"The Invisible" is created over a loop of a recording of ambience in a jail (you can hear the looping end and the underlying recording play out at the end of the piece). Most of the percussion is in fact foot falls, rattling of jail keys and door slams in the facility. The bluesy sounding vocal is a prisoner's moan, and if you listen closely you can hear one of the prisoners saying "Gonna see us now" within the loop.

The track came into existence when we were working with the source recording to use as "institutional" ambience in the introduction of a piece that failed to make it onto the CD. We looped a section of the source recording to work with EQ-ing and balancing. The section just happened to have a perfect rhythmic cycle to it and was quite musical. The repeated phrase "Gonna see us now" made us think of how truly invisible people in prison have become. When we added sound treatments, the track took on a quality that many listeners describe as reminiscent of the sounds of the hold of a slave ship (the moan, the "chains," a watery sloshing sound like waves slapping a haul), which we think is appropriate to the track.

In the segue between "The Invisible" and "Breaking the Soft Machines" the vocal is from a Hindi spiritual song. It translates, "These words that come to my mouth cannot be stopped."

About Cyber Zen Sound Engine

Cyber Zen Sound Engine are Houston based underground ambient/electronica artists GraceNoteX and Smith6079. Their 2000 debut CD "Moonscapes: How Stones Become Enlightened" spent 3 months in NAV's Top 100 airplay charts, and was hailed as "an absolutely essential CD" for any ambient collection by Jim Brenholts (author of Tracks Across the Universe: A Chronology of Ambient and Electronic Music). CZSE attempt to explore the territory between the various branches of ambient, electronic, and spacemusic.

"The Intercepted Transmissions" released in 2001, found CZSE collaborating with critically acclaimed Detroit artist Matt Borghi. The CD was a finalist for Best Ambient/Electronica CD of 2001 in the 5th Annual NAV Magazine Music Awards, and was featured on NPR's nationally syndicated program **Music from the Hearts of Space.**

CZSE are currently back in the studio working on a collaboration with English ambient artist Tom Boon.